

# State Forestry Assessment and Strategy Summary Nevada

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## State Forestry Assessment:

The Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) conducted a GIS analysis using 11 criteria layers that relate to the national themes and represent the state's highest priorities. These criteria layers, equally weighted, were combined, and areas where 5 or more data layers overlap were identified as priority landscapes. This led to the identification of 11 general threats and 17 priority landscapes where NDF will focus its natural resources program efforts.

**Assessment criteria** included private forest lands, forest health and risk (SAP), annual grasses with 25% coverage, T&E species, CWPP-WUI, biomass locations with buffer of source of fuels, proposed BLM and USFS projects, population change 2000-2030, impaired watershed boundaries (EPA 303d), forest fragmentation (SAP), and forest stewardship high potential areas.

**Priority landscapes** for Nevada were derived from state assessment GIS analysis (any area that has at least 5 overlapping priority layers) and were identified as:

- Lake Tahoe Basin
- Sierra Front
- Virginia Range
- Pine Nut Range
- Middle Walker River Basin
- Paradise Valley
- Jarbidge
- Humboldt River Basin (Elko segment)
- Spring Creek Area
- Ruby Mountain (Valley area)
- Northern Pequop Range
- East Humboldt Range
- Egan/Cherry Creek Ranges
- Schell Creek Range
- Wilson Creek Range
- Virgin/Muddy River Basin
- Spring Mountain Range

## State Natural Resource Strategy:

The State Natural Resource Strategy explains how the NDF will address identified threats to important natural resources within priority forest landscapes. The strategies do not pinpoint specific locations throughout the state, but rather focus on trends and issues common to certain regions or vegetation types. For each threat and set of strategies include description of sub-strategies, available resources, partners, and needs.

### Key Threats & Strategies:

#### Forest health, pests, and pathogens

##### Region-wide aspen stand deterioration and decline

##### Increased wildfire scale and intensity

##### Water quality and quantity maintenance

- Implement forest management plans that improve forest conditions across landscapes
- Implement fuel reduction projects that reduce high intensity wildfires
- Develop and Improve inventory data of forest conditions
- Increase agency expertise and capacity in prescribed fire
- Continue landowner information and education (I&E) programs

##### Wildland urban interface development

- Implement the Wildland Fire Risk Assessments and Community Wildfire Protection Plans
- Increase public awareness of fire safety

##### Riparian system degradation

- Invasive species control and riparian restoration projects
- Research & Monitoring
- Education

##### Community forest maintenance

- Increase and improve resources and partnerships to meet the growing need for technical assistance, education and outreach
- Education and Outreach
- Community UF Program Development and Management
- Funding
- Tree Planting
- Reduce runoff from urban areas into watersheds.

##### Special status species habitat degradation

- Focus planning efforts at landscape level to maintain or enhance forest and woodland communities
- Work to protect large acreages of forest and other habitats from development pressures
- Increase capacity for providing management information to landowners, managers, and industry
- Integrate programs to provide holistic management tools to all landowners.
- Increase the use of prescribed fire in management of vegetation types.

##### Ecosystem fragmentation

- Minimize effects of fragmented ownership
- Provide incentives to conserve working forestlands

##### Climate change

- Develop management strategies under changing climate scenarios
- Explore the carbon sequestration potential of forests
- Native seed collection

### **Invasive weeds**

- Monitor invasive plants within the state
- Increase knowledge of weeds and issues
- Develop rehabilitation and restoration strategies for using native or desired nonnative species for restoration and rehabilitation

### **Strategy Implementation & Challenges Moving Forward:**

*Resource Investment:* The elimination of federal cost-share programs for state forestry agencies and directing those funds to the Natural Resource Conservation Service has removed one of the primary incentives for private forest landowners to implement stewardship plans written by NDF staff. NDF will use state and outside funding to implement the strategies outlined in this document that target issues identified in the State Assessment.

*Monitoring/Revision:* Many of the threats identified in the assessment are of a nature or scale that makes developing an effective and comprehensive monitoring protocol that measures the impact of NDF's individual and collaborative efforts a challenge. The strategies identified are part of a long term program which shall be updated and adapted as a result of effective monitoring and changing natural resource conditions.

**Needs required in implementing strategies** include: Forest Inventory and Assessment data; NDF access to federal cost share funds; funding for fire prevention, fuel reduction, and suppression; general NDF staffing and funding; increased emphasis on working across boundaries/ownerships; increased agency collaboration; full benefit-cost analysis of biomass utilization; viable landowner incentives for carbon sequestration; research on the effects of climate change on our forests and other environments; improved GIS database of weed occurrence from NV Department of Agriculture.

